



# Marine Debris Legislation

**Most of the trash in our ocean comes from land, and most of it is made of plastic. This global problem can be tackled at home, and Heal the Bay believes that California should take the lead in preventing marine debris from wreaking havoc on marine life and on our coastal economy. To further this goal, Heal the Bay is sponsoring and supporting a series of bills to tackle marine debris in our oceans and along our coast. For the most updated information on current bills, visit our [Action Alerts Page](#).**

## **Ban the Bag**

### **AB 1998 (Brownley)**

This bill, AB 1998, would prohibit supermarkets and convenience stores from distributing or providing plastic single-use bags and would regulate the distribution of paper bags so that consumers can switch to reusable bags.

## **Take it Back**

### **AB 2139 (Chesbro)**

This bill, AB 2139, would have established a producer take-back system, or Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), requiring manufacturers to develop product stewardship plans for certain hazardous products such as medical sharps, pesticide containers, and small propane tanks. Programs similar to AB 2139 have been successful in preventing hazardous products from entering the waste stream and the environment. Unfortunately, AB 2139 was voted down in June of 2010.

## **Leash Your Lid**

### **AB 925 (Saldaña)**

This bill requires bottle manufacturers to redesign plastic beverage bottles with attached lids made of recyclable material. Plastic bottle caps are frequently found on beaches and inland waterways and are commonly ingested by marine life, most notably, seabirds. Like past legislation to attach aluminum can pull-tabs to the cans, AB 925 is a common sense approach to preventing dangerous litter from entering the marine environment, and is currently being debated in the State Legislature

## **Hold on to Your Butt**

### **SB 4 (Oropeza)**

SB 4 would ban smoking at all state beaches and parks, thereby reducing the amount of cigarette butt litter in coastal environments. Cigarette filters are made from acetate, a plastic product that does not biodegrade and may contain toxic chemicals that are harmful to wildlife. Banning smoking on our public parks and beaches will also help prevent wildfires and reduce second-hand smoke exposure, creating a safer environment for beachgoers and park visitors. Unfortunately, SB 4 was vetoed in May 2010.

## **Derelict Fishing Gear**

### **SB 21 (Simitian)**

SB 21 will require by January 2012 all fishing licenses and official brochures issued in the state to have printed on them a toll-free number and website for purposes of reporting lost fishing gear, also known as "derelict fishing gear." This lost gear continues to trap marine life that have not been intended for catch and is a public safety hazard for boaters, swimmers and divers. SB 21 was passed in August 2010.